THE LINE OF
DC
SUPER-STARS
FORBIDDEN TALES OF DARK MANSION
FORBIDDEN TALES OF
DARK MANSION
20c
NO. 15
MAR.
30525
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
In This Issue...
THE SHOCKER OF THE YEAR--
"A SLAY RIDE WITH SANTA!"

Are you ready for a Daisy B·B Gun? Your parents have ways of knowing.

Remember when you got your bike? You promised to use it safely. Stay off busy streets. Look before you cross an intersection. Keep it out of the driveway.

Well, safety is even more important with a Daisy than with a bike. Because a Daisy is a B•B gun. It's not a toy.

If you keep those promises with your bike, your parents will see that you're ready for a Daisy.

We think every boy should have the thrill of owning a Daisy B•B Gun. But we want him to be ready.

We want him to know about the responsibility of owning a B•B gun.

So, before you ask for a Daisy, think it over. Discuss it with your parents. Tell them how you've kept your promise and met your responsibilities.

When you find that you're ready for a Daisy, you'll find a Daisy B•B Gun ready and waiting for you.

Send for "The Air Rifle Marksman." Mail your name, address, and 25c to Daisy, P.O. Box 220, Rogers, Arkansas 72756.

The B·B Gun every boy dreams about.

Division Victor Comptometer Corporation Rogers, Arkansas 72756

DARK MANSION
SEASONS SALUTATIONS, SWEETIES! LIKE MY NEW CAULDRON?... IT'S A GIFT FROM MY FAVORITE FEN FIEND!
I'M STIRRING UP A BATCH OF HOLIDAY TREATS--TALES TO THRILL AND MAYBE EVEN TERRORIZE!
LIKE, FOR EXAMPLE, FOR YOU MUSIC LOVERS, WE HAVE A SMALL CHILLER TITLED "THE DEMON HORN" PROBABLY IT'LL...ER...BLOW YOUR MIND!
AND FOR YOU WHO DIG THE CLASSICS, TAKE A LOOK AT OUR VERSION OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S "FEATHERTOP," A SOULFUL SAGA ABOUT A SCARECROW!
BUT THE BIG TREAT IN THIS VISIT TO THE DARK MANSION IS ON THE VERY NEXT PAGE! MEET YOU THERE IN A HALF SEC...
Z-215

FORBIDDEN TALES OF DARK MANSION, Vol. 4, No. 15, Feb.-Mar., 1974, Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019. Carmine Infantino, Publisher. Dennis O'Neil, Editor. Sol Harrison, Vice-President—Production Manager. Advertising Representative, Sanford Schwarz & Co., Inc., 16 West 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. Copyright © 1973 by National Periodical Publications, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

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--AND HERE I AM! I'M SO GLAD YOU'VE DECIDED TO SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH ME, CURLED UP BY A WARM FIREPLACE IN THE INNER RECESSES OF THE DARK MANSION! AND YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, BECAUSE IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS EVE, AND I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO MISS...
A SLAY RIDE WITH SANTA
X-MAS EVE
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY! YOU'RE NOT THE REAL SANTA CLAUS! I KNOW YOU'RE NOT!
B-BUT OF COURSE I'M THE REAL SANTA CLAUS, HONEY! LOOK AT MY BEARD, AND MY RED SUIT!
GIVE WHAT YOU CAN HELP THE POOR
SCRIPT BY MICHAEL FLEISHER
SCRIPT CONTINUITY BY RUSSELL CARLEY
DAN GREEN

ANYBODY CAN HAVE A RED SUIT... BUT THE REAL SANTA ALWAYS HAS TOYS FOR US KIDS... AND YOU DON'T HAVE ANY!
HO HO HO! SO IT'S TOYS YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, IS IT? WELL, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT A THING!

I'M REALLY NOT SUPPOSED TO GIVE OUT ANY TOYS UNTIL LATE TONIGHT, AFTER ALL THE LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS ARE FAST ASLEEP!
BUT SINCE YOU'RE MY SPECIAL FRIEND, I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU TO MY WORK-SHOP AND GIVE YOU YOUR TOY RIGHT NOW!
POOR

YOU ARE? WOW! THANKS, SANTA!

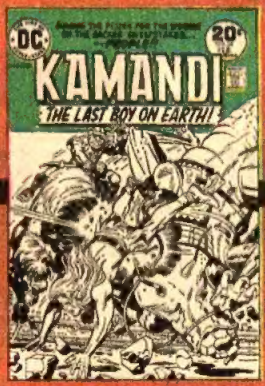
PRESENTLY...
I-IS THIS YOUR WORKSHOP, SANTA? I THOUGHT--
--THAT I LIVED AT THE NORTH POLE? WITH A BUNCH OF ELVES?
NOW ISN'T THAT SILLY? YOU DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE ALL THAT NONSENSE, DID YOU?
CHEAP ROOMS TRANSIENTS WELCOME
N-NO... NOT REALLY!

NOW YOU COME RIGHT ON INSIDE WITH ME...AND I'LL HAVE THAT TOY FOR YOU IN A JIFFY!
203

GEE, SANTA, YOU'RE AWFUL NICE! I-I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT I SAID, ABOUT YOU NOT BEING THE REAL SANTA!
HA! HA! OH, THAT'S OKAY, HONEY! NOW LET'S SEE... WHERE DID I PUT THAT TOY..? AHA, HERE IT IS!
203
MINUTES PASSED... QUIET MINUTES... INTERRUPTED ONLY BY THE JOLLY BANTER OF A MAKE-BELIEVE SANTA AND THE HAPPY LAUGHTER OF A LITTLE GIRL! AND THEN...
BETTER HUSTLE ON BACK TO THE OLD CHIMNEY! BEEN GONE TOO LONG ALREADY!
I HATED TO DO IT, BUT I NEED THE MONEY SHE WAS CARRYING!
W-WHY, H-HELLO THERE, MRS. O'NEIL! I--
WHERE'S MY RENT, MR. DIGBY? YOU'RE THREE WEEKS OVERDUE, AND I--
P-PLEASE, MRS. O'NEIL! I-I KNOW I'M A BIT LATE! B-BUT TONIGHT'S CHRISTMAS EVE AND I DON'T GET PAID ON THIS SANTA JOB TILL THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW! I PROMISE, I'LL--
NOW LOOK HERE, MR. DIGBY! I--
GEE, THANKS, MRS. O'NEIL! I KNEW YOU'D UNDERSTAND! SEE YOU DAY AFTER TOMORROW!
...AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!
WAIT A MINUTE, DARN YOUR HIDE! I... I...
HARRUMPH! HE'S GONE, THAT NO-GOOD DEADBEAT!
3

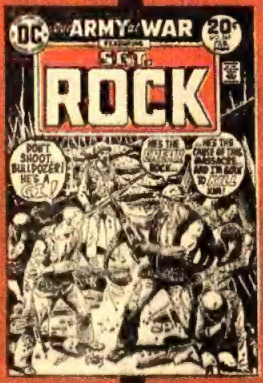
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

DARE-DEVIL STUNTS-
WILD ACTION!
WHIN
TTP
TURBO
TOWER OF POWER
Kenner
General Mills
CORNERS ON TWO WHEELS, LIKE THE PROS!
WILD WHEELIES!
PUMP THE TOWER-HEAR THE JET-LIKE WHINE!
AS AIR JET SPINS GYRO-POWER WHEEL FASTER AND FASTER...
THE POWER IS IN THE TOWER!
NO BATTERIES!
DELUXE THRILL SET
5 EXCITING Kenner ACTION SETS
•TTP TOWER & CAR • TTP CYCLE ACTION SET
•TTP TOWER & CYCLE • TTP CAR STUNT SET
•TTP DELUXE THRILL SET
FERRARI
MERCEDES C-111
DYN-O-CHARGER
FUTURA-X
TURB-O-CHARGER
TURB-O-DUSTER
TURB-O-CHOPPER
TURB-O-FLASH
CARS AND CYCLES ALSO SOLD SEPARATELY!



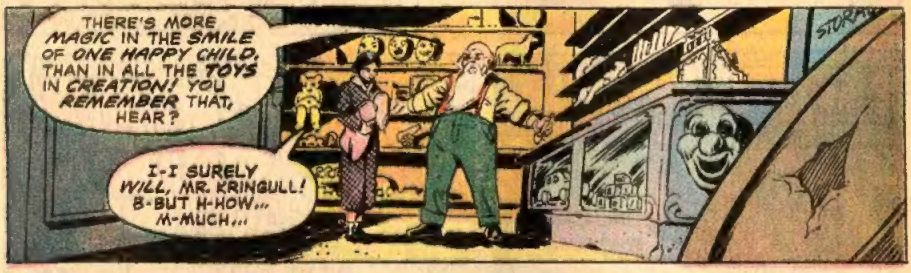
THE LINE OF DC SUPER-STARS

FOR THE BEST COMICS


ARMY AT WAR
SGT. ROCK
DON'T SHOOT BULLDOZER! HE'S A GOOD GUY!
HE'S THE UNTOUCHABLE ROCK
HE'S THE CHIEF OF THE BADDIES AND I'M GOING TO KILL HIM!

MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY...
HERE YOU ARE, MRS. GREEN... ALL FIXED UP AND REPAINTED SO IT'S AS GOOD AS NEW!
WH-WHY THANK YOU, MR. KRINGULL! I-IT'S... BEAUTIFUL!
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND FOR THE LIFE OF ME WHY SOME FOLKS THROW THESE OLD TOYS AWAY!
888
KRISTOPHER KRINGULL
MENDER OF TOYS

I SWEAR, MR. KRINGULL, THE WAY YOU MEND THESE OLD TOYS SO THAT US... US FOLKS THAT DON'T HAVE MUCH CAN STILL HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS... WH-WHY THERE'S SOMETHIN' MAGICAL ABOUT IT!
PSHAW! LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING...

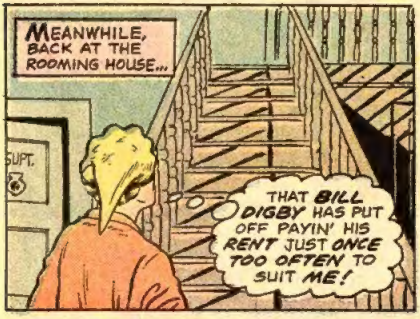

THERE'S MORE MAGIC IN THE SMILE OF ONE HAPPY CHILD, THAN IN ALL THE TOYS IN CREATION! YOU REMEMBER THAT, HEAR?
I-I SURELY WILL, MR. KRINGULL! B-BUT H-HOW... M-MUCH...

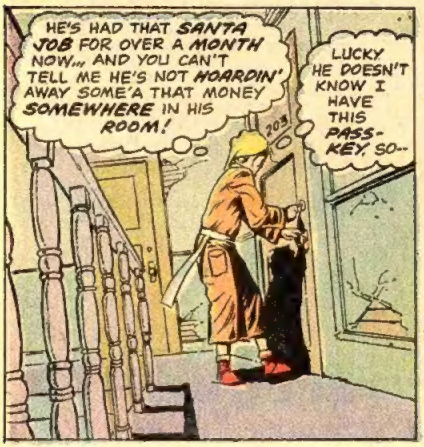
NOT A DARN THING, MRS. GREEN! I'M JUST PLEASED AS PUNCH THAT I WAS ABLE TO FIX UP ALL THE BROKEN TOYS IN MY SHOP IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS!
TONIGHT IS CHRISTMAS EVE, YOU KNOW, AND I WANT TO CLOSE UP EARLY!

GOT AN IMPORTANT LITTLE--ER-- ERRAND TO PERFORM TONIGHT, AND A LOTTA FRIENDS ARE GONNA BE MIGHTY CROSS WITH ME IF I DON'T DO WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO!

SO YOU JUST GIVE THAT OLD DOLL TO LITTLE SANDI AND TELL HER TO HAVE A FINE OLD CHRISTMAS!
AND IF SHE ASKS WHERE YOU GOT IT, YOU JUST TELL HER IT CAME STRAIGHT FROM SANTA CLAUS!

A-ALL RIGHT! BUT WHILE YOU'RE RUNNIN' YOUR ERRAND, YOU BE CAREFUL!
THE WAY PEOPLE DRIVE NOWADAYS, THE ROADS AIN'T SAFE!
DON'T YOU WORRY, MRS. GREEN! I ALWAYS TAKE A SPECIAL SCENIC ROUTE! AVOID ALL THE... TRAFFIC! GOODBYE, NOW!


MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE ROOMING HOUSE...
SUPT.
THAT BILL DIGBY HAS PUT OFF PAYIN' HIS RENT JUST ONCE TOO OFTEN TO SUIT ME!


HE'S HAD THAT SANTA JOB FOR OVER A MONTH NOW... AND YOU CAN'T TELL ME HE'S NOT HOARDIN' AWAY SOME'A THAT MONEY SOMEWHERE IN HIS ROOM!
LUCKY HE DOESN'T KNOW I HAVE THIS PASS-KEY, SO...

YAAAAAAAHHHH
NO COOKING ROOM!
SECRET HAND HITS O'NEILL'S OFFICE
5

POOR MRS. O'NEIL! SHE'S NEVER SEEN A HANGING BEFORE! SHE RACES MADLY DOWN THE FLIGHT OF STAIRS AND DIALS THE TELEPHONE WITH TREMBLING HANDS...
OPERATOR, G-GIVE ME THE POLICE!
HOURS LATER, BILL DIGBY RETURNS TO THE ROOMING HOUSE, IT IS ALMOST DUSK...
HERE WE ARE AT MY WORKSHOP, RALPHIE! IN A MINUTE...
...I'M GOING TO PROVE TO YOU THAT I'M THE REAL--
POLICE OFFICERS, DIGBY!
HUNH--!?!
WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUES--
OOOF--!
SORRY, FUZZ! I GOTTA SEE A MAN ABOUT A DOG!
PARK
NO, JULIE, DON'T! WAIT'LL HE'S IN THE CLEAR OR YOU'RE LIABLE TO HIT ONE'A THEM SHOPPERS!
BLAM! BLAM!
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
THERE HE IS! GET HIM!

WHERE THE BLOODY BLUE BLAZES IS HE?
DON'T WORRY! I NAILED 'IM GOOD! HE WON'T GET FAR... NOT WITH ALL THAT GORE RUNNIN' OUTA HIS SHOULDER!

BILL DIGBY TRUDGES HEAVILY THROUGH THE SLUSH-CLOGGED STREETS... HIS BODY WRACKED WITH A WHITE-HOT FEVER AND HIS SHOULDER THROBBING WITH AN ANGRY PAIN! AND FINALLY...

A S-STORAGE ROOM... OR SOMETHING ... MAYBE HIDE... THERE... MAYBE...
REAR ENTRANCE
KRISTOPHER KRINGULL
MENDER OF TOYS
PLEASE MAKE ALL DELIVERIES AROUND FRONT

FUN & LOW PRICES at most of these fine stores!

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by COLECO

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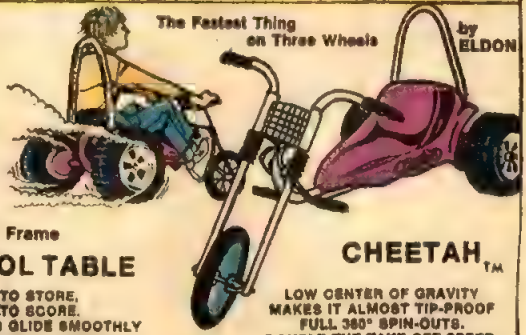

The Fastest Thing on Three Wheels

by ELDON

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LOW CENTER OF GRAVITY MAKES IT ALMOST TIP-PROOF FULL 360° SPIN-OUTS. DOUBLE THE TAKE OFF SPEED.

BATTERY OPERATED 2 LANE ROAD RACING SET INCLUDES * CURVED, STRAIGHT, CROSS-OVER & POWER INTAKE TRACKS, * 2 DUNE BUGGIES * 2 SPEED CONTROLLERS

ATC THREE-WHEEL RIDEM CYCLE

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SAFE TOY ANIMALS LOOK REAL! FEEL REAL!

Imperial WONDER Soft-Vinyl ZOO

FANG SNAKE

Take Him For A Walk

ALFIE ALLIGATOR

KIMO POLAR BEAR

GROWLING, REALISTIC. WITH LEASH

HE'S FRIENDLY, HE'S FEROCIOUS. OVER 2½ FEET.

18" LONG WITH 12" GOLD FINISH METAL CHAIN LEASH AND NAME TAG.

SKIPPER & SPORT KANGAROO	SQUIRREL MONKEY FAMILY	TOMMY & TAMMY
REALISTIC MOTHER WITH LOVEABLE BABY ON A LEASH, THAT ALSO FITS IN POUCH	LIFE SIZE & REALISTIC WITH BENDABLE TAIL. HOLD HIM IN YOUR HAND	THE TURTLE TWINS. YOUR NATURE FRIENDS. TAKE 'EM BOTH.

IMPERIAL VINYL TOYS also available at other fine stores.

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Brighten All Your Clothes

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227 East 45th St., New York, N.Y. 10017

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☐ 75¢ for 2 sets of transfers (12 designs).

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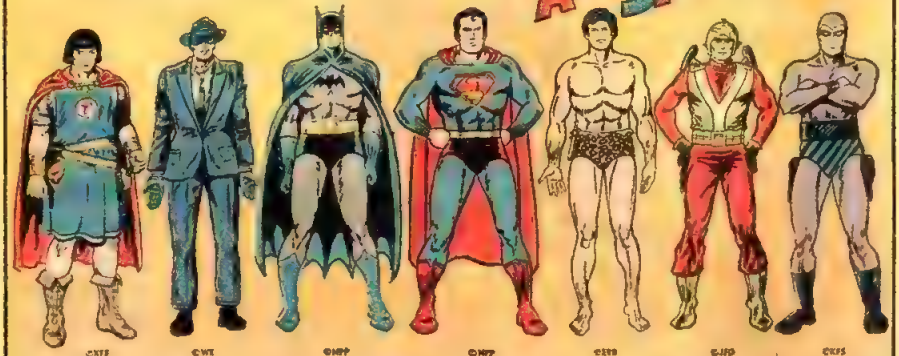

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The Menomonee Falls Gazette
P.O. Box 255 Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

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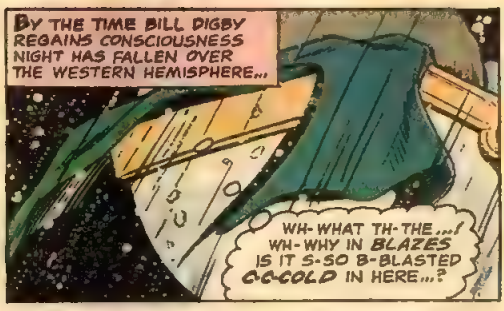
52 Issues $29.00

BILL DIGBY'S SHOULDER STILL THROBS, AND DRIED BLOOD CAKES HIS HAND LIKE A GRISLY RED GLOVE! NO WONDER, THEN, THAT BILL DIGBY CRAWLS BENEATH THE TARPAULIN... AND LAPSES INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS...

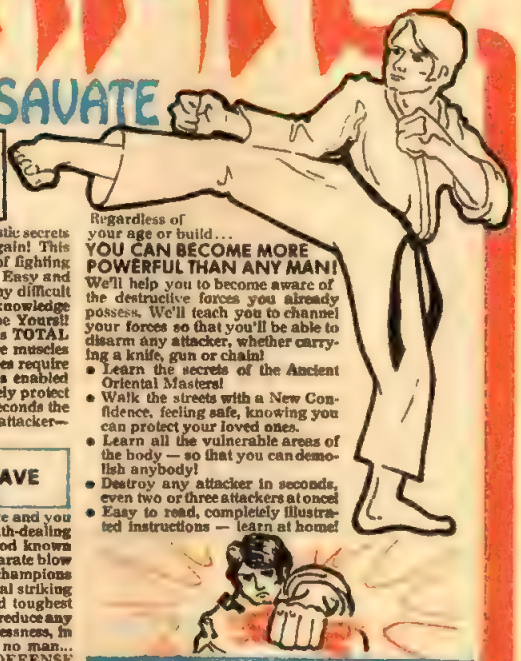
AN' SPEAKIN' OF CHRISTMAS, IT'S HIGH TIME I GOT STARTED!
IT'S ONLY AROUND MIDNIGHT IN EUROPE... AND AFRICA. BUT IF I WANT TO GET TO ASIA AND AUSTRALIA BEFORE THE KIDS GET OUT OF BED, I'LL REALLY HAVE TO POUR ON SOME HUSTLE!


BY THE TIME BILL DIGBY REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS NIGHT HAS FALLEN OVER THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE...
WH-WHAT TH-THE...! WH-WHY IN BLAZES IS IT S-SO B-BLASTED C-COLD IN HERE...?

AH, YES, BILL DIGBY, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS, AND YOU ARE SOARING THROUGH THE COAL-BLACK NIGHT, A STOWAWAY ON HIS MAGIC SLEIGH...
TH-THIS MAY BE S-SOMEBODY'S IDEA OF A PRETTY FUNNY JOKE... BUT I'M GETTIN' OUTA HERE!
OH, NO, BILL DIGBY, DON'T STAND UP! IT'S NOT SAFE TO STAND ON THE MAGIC SLEIGH... FOR SOMETIMES THE FLYING REINDEER FALTER... SOMETIMES, WITHOUT WARNING, THE SLEIGH TURNS...
WHA-!? OH NO...! I- I'M F-FAL--
THAT'S THE SECOND TIME TONIGHT I THOUGHT I HEARD A FUNNY NOISE!
OH WELL, I GUESS THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU WHEN YOU GET TO BE FIFTEEN HUNDRED YEARS OLD!
HO
HO HO HO
BMB.

KARATE

JUDO-JIU-JITSU-SAVATE



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Regardless of your age or build...

YOU CAN BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY MAN!

We'll help you to become aware of the destructive forces you already possess. We'll teach you to channel your forces so that you'll be able to disarm any attacker, whether carrying a knife, gun or chain!

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- Walk the streets with a New Confidence, feeling safe, knowing you can protect your loved ones.
- Learn all the vulnerable areas of the body — so that you can demolish anybody!
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Please send me all that Free Fantastic Information plus a Free Colorful Brochure — that will show me how to become a Self-Defense Fighting Expert!! Enclosed you'll find 25c to help cover postage and handling.

Name_____ Age____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

IN STEREO, ON RECORDS, 8 TRACK, CASSETTE AND REEL-TO-REEL TAPES

COUNTRY & WESTERN CLASSICS

E-C TAPE SERVICE
[illegible]
Brookfield, Wisconsin [illegible]

Country and Western the All-American music, has been over-shadowed by the Rock & Roll sensations of the last 15 years. Now for the first time, E-C custom recordings brings to the Country fan a library of his music. We offer the top 10 songs from the past 17 years — 1955 through 1971 — programmed by year on records, 8-track tapes, cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes by the original artists.

This is the most unique and most complete library of Country music ever assembled and offered to the public. All of the great stars from the last 17 years that did so much to popularize Country music are in this collection — people like Eddie Arnold, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams, Bonny James, Merle Haggard, Charly Pride, Tom T. Hall, Tex Ritter and anyone who was someone in Country music. You get the original artists recorded in stereo.* This library of great country music is available limited story and may be purchased individually at $6.95 per tape or $5.98 per record. However, to realize super savings, we suggest ordering the entire library and reliving this great history of country music from 1955 through 1971. The entire library of records is $70 which is a savings of $31.46 over the cost of individual records. The entire 8-track or cassette library is $90 which is a savings of $28.66 over the cost of the individual tapes. In addition with each library order we will include a free Ess & Ess wood and vinyl carrying case which has a suggested retail of $11.95 and makes your savings even greater. Do not hesitate. Order today. This offer may not be repeated. *early years electronically rehanced for stereo

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[illegible]		

WITH EACH LIBRARY ORDER WE WILL INCLUDE AN $11.95 VALUE A WOOD AND VINYL ESS & ESS CARRYING CASE

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☐ 1956	☐ 1960	☐ 1964	☐ 1968	
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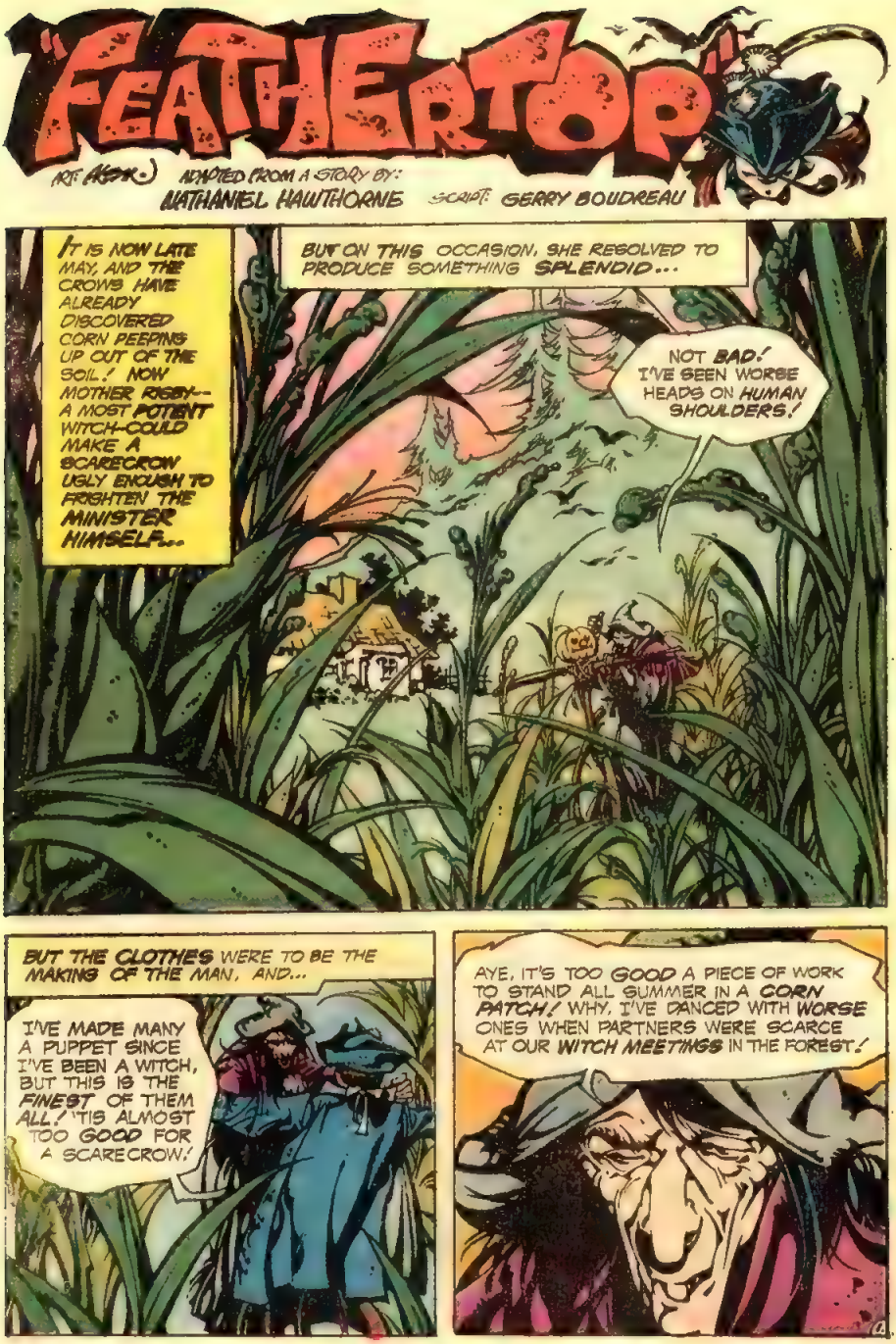
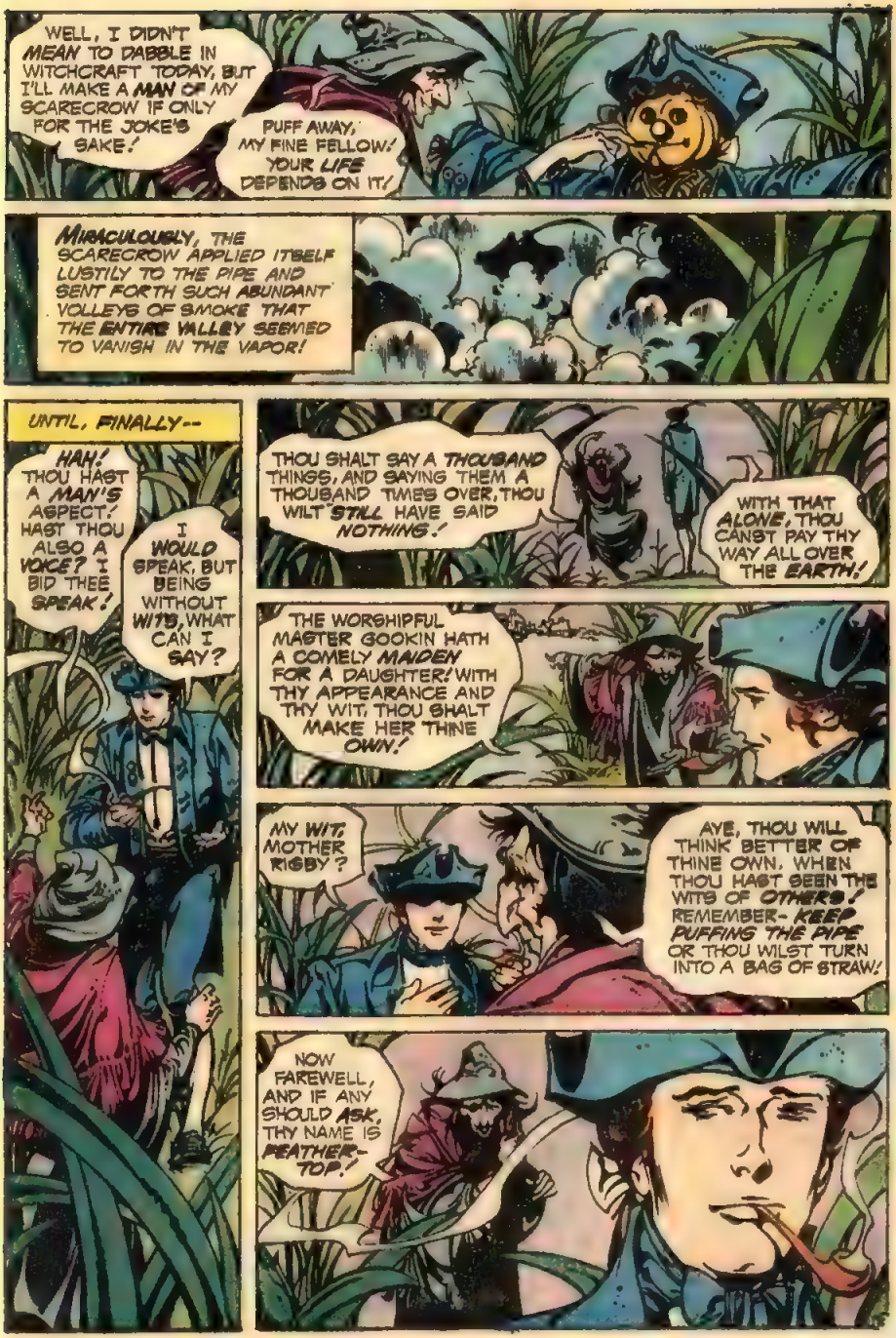
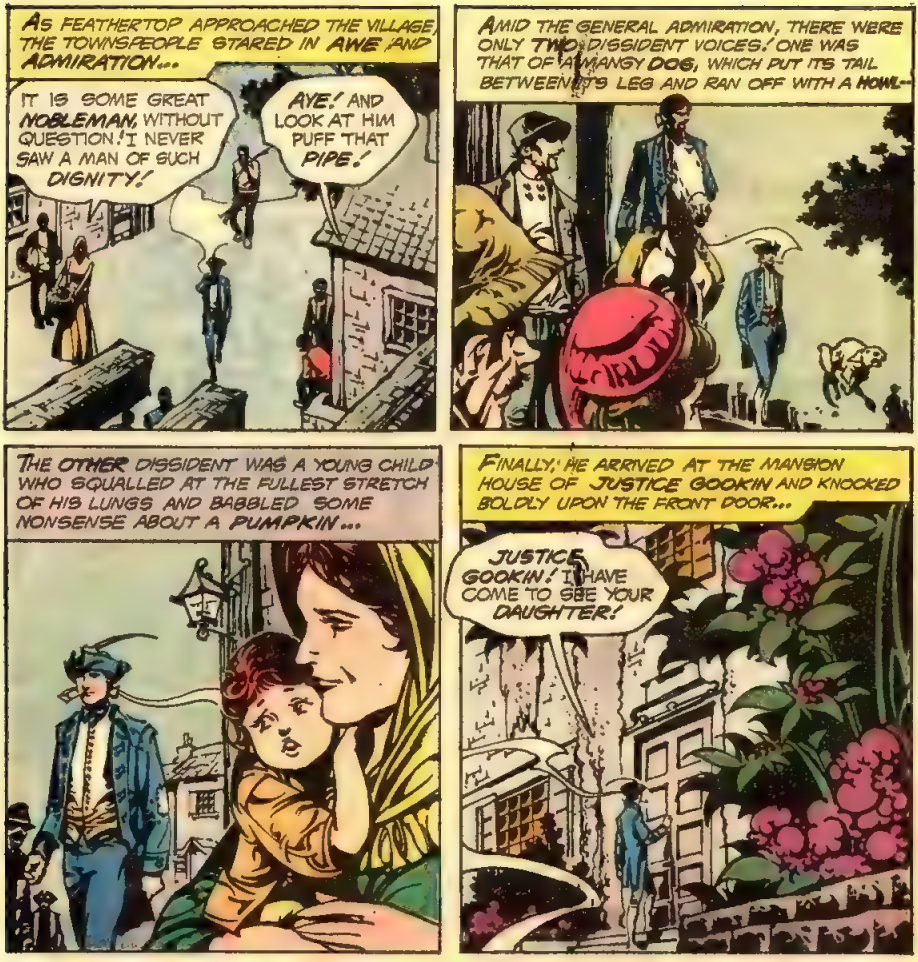

"FEATHERTOP"
ART: ALEX N.
ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY: NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE
SCRIPT: GERRY BOUDREAU
IT IS NOW LATE MAY, AND THE CROWS HAVE ALREADY DISCOVERED CORN PEEPING UP OUT OF THE SOIL! NOW MOTHER RIGBY--A MOST POTENT WITCH--COULD MAKE A SCARECROW UGLY ENOUGH TO FRIGHTEN THE MINISTER HIMSELF...
BUT ON THIS OCCASION, SHE RESOLVED TO PRODUCE SOMETHING SPLENDID...
NOT BAD! I'VE SEEN WORSE HEADS ON HUMAN SHOULDERS!
BUT THE CLOTHES WERE TO BE THE MAKING OF THE MAN, AND...
I'VE MADE MANY A PUPPET SINCE I'VE BEEN A WITCH, BUT THIS IS THE FINEST OF THEM ALL! 'TIS ALMOST TOO GOOD FOR A SCARECROW!
AYE, IT'S TOO GOOD A PIECE OF WORK TO STAND ALL SUMMER IN A CORN PATCH! WHY, I'VE DANCED WITH WORSE ONES WHEN PARTNERS WERE SCARCE AT OUR WITCH MEETINGS IN THE FOREST!


WELL, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DABBLE IN WITCHCRAFT TODAY, BUT I'LL MAKE A MAN OF MY SCARECROW IF ONLY FOR THE JOKE'S SAKE!
PUFF AWAY, MY FINE FELLOW! YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!
MIRACULOUSLY, THE SCARECROW APPLIED ITSELF LUSTILY TO THE PIPE AND SENT FORTH SUCH ABUNDANT VOLLEYS OF SMOKE THAT THE ENTIRE VALLEY SEEMED TO VANISH IN THE VAPOR!
UNTIL, FINALLY--
HAH! THOU HAST A MAN'S ASPECT! HAST THOU ALSO A VOICE? I BID THEE SPEAK!
I WOULD SPEAK, BUT BEING WITHOUT WITS, WHAT CAN I SAY?
THOU SHALT SAY A THOUSAND THINGS, AND SAYING THEM A THOUSAND TIMES OVER, THOU WILT STILL HAVE SAID NOTHING!
WITH THAT ALONE, THOU CANST PAY THY WAY ALL OVER THE EARTH!
THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER GOOKIN HATH A COMELY MAIDEN FOR A DAUGHTER! WITH THY APPEARANCE AND THY WIT, THOU SHALT MAKE HER THINE OWN!
MY WIT, MOTHER RIGBY?
AYE, THOU WILL THINK BETTER OF THINE OWN, WHEN THOU HAST SEEN THE WITS OF OTHERS! REMEMBER- KEEP PUFFING THE PIPE OR THOU WILST TURN INTO A BAG OF STRAW!
NOW FAREWELL, AND IF ANY SHOULD ASK, THY NAME IS FEATHER-TOP!


AS FEATHERTOP APPROACHED THE VILLAGE, THE TOWNSPEOPLE STARED IN AWE AND ADMIRATION...
IT IS SOME GREAT NOBLEMAN, WITHOUT QUESTION! I NEVER SAW A MAN OF SUCH DIGNITY!
AYE! AND LOOK AT HIM PUFF THAT PIPE!
AMID THE GENERAL ADMIRATION, THERE WERE ONLY TWO DISSIDENT VOICES! ONE WAS THAT OF A MANGY DOG, WHICH PUT ITS TAIL BETWEEN IT'S LEG AND RAN OFF WITH A HOWL—
THE OTHER DISSIDENT WAS A YOUNG CHILD WHO SQUALLED AT THE FULLEST STRETCH OF HIS LUNGS AND BABBLED SOME NONSENSE ABOUT A PUMPKIN...
FINALLY, HE ARRIVED AT THE MANSION HOUSE OF JUSTICE GOOKIN AND KNOCKED BOLDLY UPON THE FRONT DOOR...
JUSTICE GOOKIN! I HAVE COME TO SEE YOUR DAUGHTER!
POLLY, THIS IS LORD FEATHERTOP! PAY YOUR DUTY TO HIS LORDSHIP, CHILD, AND HONOR HIM AS HIS TITLE DESERVES!
WITH THAT, THE WORSHIPFUL MAGISTRATE QUITTED THE ROOM!
CONTINUED ON 35 PAGE FOLLOWING

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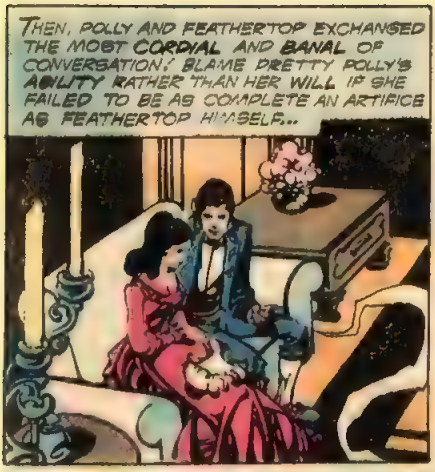
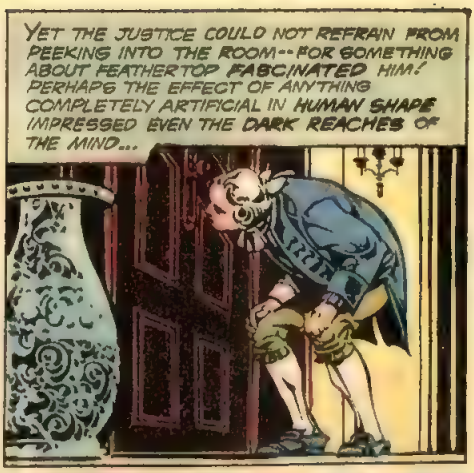
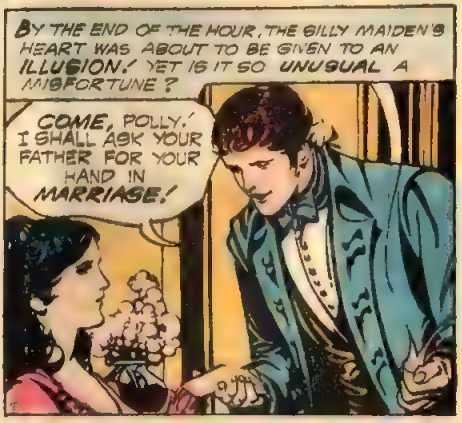

THEN, POLLY AND FEATHERTOP EXCHANGED THE MOST CORDIAL AND BANAL OF CONVERSATION! BLAME PRETTY POLLY'S ABILITY RATHER THAN HER WILL IF SHE FAILED TO BE AS COMPLETE AN ARTIFICE AS FEATHERTOP HIMSELF...


YET THE JUSTICE COULD NOT REFRAIN FROM PEEKING INTO THE ROOM--FOR SOMETHING ABOUT FEATHERTOP FASCINATED HIM! PERHAPS THE EFFECT OF ANYTHING COMPLETELY ARTIFICIAL IN HUMAN SHAPE IMPRESSED EVEN THE DARK REACHES OF THE MIND...

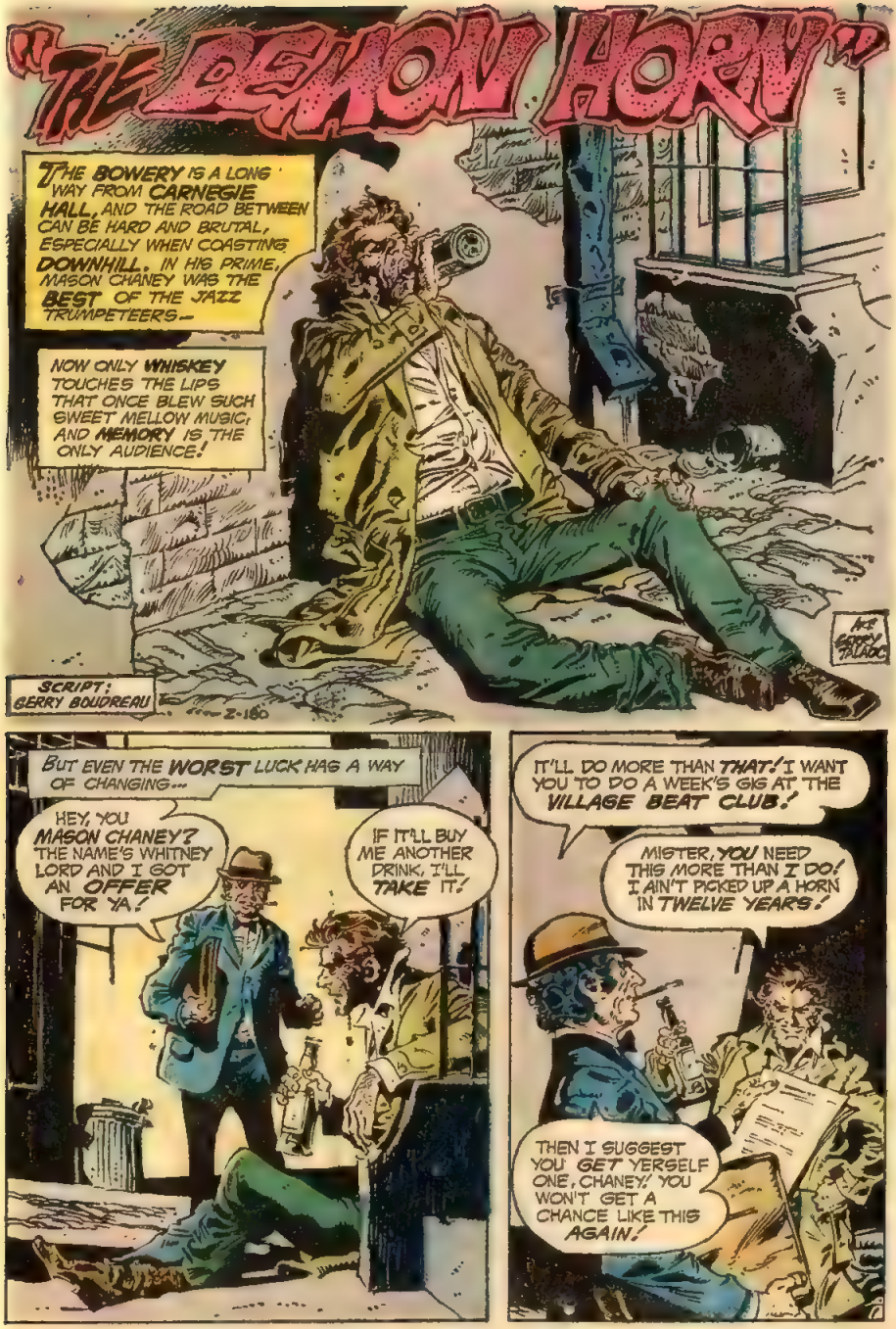
THE LONGER THE CONVERSATION CONTINUED, THE MORE CHARMED WAS PRETTY POLLY, UNTIL WITHIN THE FIRST QUARTER OF AN HOUR (AS JUSTICE GOOKIN NOTED BY HIS WATCH) SHE EVIDENTLY BEGAN TO BE IN LOVE--!


BY THE END OF THE HOUR, THE SILLY MAIDEN'S HEART WAS ABOUT TO BE GIVEN TO AN ILLUSION! YET IS IT SO UNUSUAL A MISFORTUNE?
COME, POLLY, I SHALL ASK YOUR FATHER FOR YOUR HAND IN MARRIAGE!

BUT AS THEY EXITED, THEY CHANCED TO PASS A FULL-LENGTH MIRROR WHICH OF COURSE WAS INCAPABLE OF FLATTERY...
YOUR LORDSHIP! OOOOOOOOHHH!!

AND FEATHERTOP TOO SAW THE GORDID PATCHWORK OF HIS REAL COMPOSITION, STRIPPED OF ALL WITCHCRAFT! FOR PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME IN ANY MORTAL EXISTENCE, AN ILLUSION HAD SEEN AND RECOGNIZED ITSELF!

MOTHER RIGBY WAS SEATED BY HER KITCHEN HEARTH IN THE TWILIGHT WHEN SHE HEARD THE CLATTER OF STICKS BEHIND HER...
FEATHERTOP! WHAT HAS GONE WRONG? DID THAT SNIFFLING HYPOCRITE THRUST YOU FROM HIS DOOR?
NO!
THEN DID HIS DAUGHTER SCORN YOU? I'LL COVER HER FACE WITH PIMPLES! HER NOSE SHALL BE AS RED AS THE COAL IN THY PIPE! HER FRONT TEETH SHALL DROP OUT!
LET HER ALONE, MOTHER! IT WAS NONE OF THAT! I'VE SEEN MYSELF, MOTHER... SEEN MYSELF FOR THE WRETCHED, RAGGED, EMPTY THING I AM!
I'LL EXIST NO LONGER! I WANT TO GO BACK TO BEING A SCARECROW! 'TIS AN INNOCENT AND USEFUL VOCATION AND WOULD SUIT ME WELL!
POOR FELLOW! THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF CHARLATANS IN THIS WORLD MADE UP OF NO MORE THAN HE WAS... YET THEY LIVE IN FAIR REPUTE AND NEVER SEE THEMSELVES FOR WHAT THEY ARE!
AYE, IT'S A SHAME MY POOR PUPPET BE THE ONLY ONE TO KNOW HIMSELF AND PERISH FOR IT! ALAS, I'LL MAKE A SCARECROW OF HIM AFTER ALL!
END.
5


"THE DEMON HORN"
THE BOWERY IS A LONG WAY FROM CARNEGIE HALL, AND THE ROAD BETWEEN CAN BE HARD AND BRUTAL, ESPECIALLY WHEN COASTING DOWNHILL. IN HIS PRIME, MASON CHANEY WAS THE BEST OF THE JAZZ TRUMPETEERS...
NOW ONLY WHISKEY TOUCHES THE LIPS THAT ONCE BLEW SUCH SWEET MELLOW MUSIC; AND MEMORY IS THE ONLY AUDIENCE!
SCRIPT: GERRY BOUDREAU
ART: GERRY TALAOC
2-180
BUT EVEN THE WORST LUCK HAS A WAY OF CHANGING...
HEY, YOU MASON CHANEY? THE NAME'S WHITNEY LORD AND I GOT AN OFFER FOR YA!
IF IT'LL BUY ME ANOTHER DRINK, I'LL TAKE IT!
IT'LL DO MORE THAN THAT! I WANT YOU TO DO A WEEK'S GIG AT THE VILLAGE BEAT CLUB!
MISTER, YOU NEED THIS MORE THAN I DO! I AIN'T PICKED UP A HORN IN TWELVE YEARS!
THEN I SUGGEST YOU GET YERSELF ONE, CHANEY! YOU WON'T GET A CHANCE LIKE THIS AGAIN!

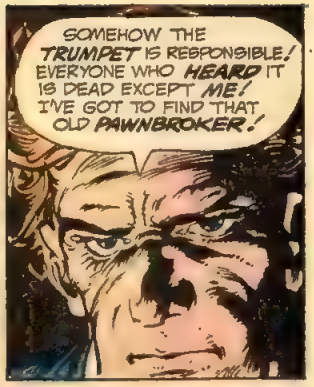
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, A REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION OCCURS...
THE ADVANCE I GOT FROM MR. LORD MAKES ME LOOK HALFWAY HUMAN AGAIN! BESIDES, I NEED THE BREAD TO GET MYSELF A NEW INSTRUMENT!
HEY--THERE'S ONE IN THE WINDOW OF THAT PAWN SHOP! FROM THE LOOKS OF THE PLACE I CAN GET IT PRETTY CHEAP! I'M PROBABLY THE ONLY CUSTOMER HE'S HAD IN YEARS!
I'M LOOKING FOR A--
--A TRUMPET, PERHAPS? I HAVE JUST THE THING FOR YOU, MR. CHANEY!
AS YOU CAN SEE, MR. CHANEY, IT IS A VERY SPECIAL HORN.
IT LOOKS RATHER... ODD! DO YOU MIND IF I TRY IT?
YOU MUSTN'T TRY IT HERE! BUT IT'S YOURS FOR ONLY TEN DOLLARS!
I'LL TAKE IT!

SO, A FEW NIGHTS LATER, MASON CHANEY DEBUTS AT THE VILLAGE BEAT CLUB, PLAYING WITH ALL HIS FORMER BRILLIANCE...
IT'S AS THOUGH THIS HORN HAD A WILL OF ITS OWN-- I COULDN'T MAKE A MISTAKE IF I WANTED TO!
AND, AS THE SHOW COMES TO A CLOSE...
YOU DID IT, CHANEY! THE SHOWSTOPPER TO END 'EM ALL! HEY, WAIT A MINUTE..! NOBODY'S APPLAUDING!
IT CAN'T BE! ALL NIGHT THEY LOVED MY STUFF! WHAT HAPPENED?
BUT, AS CHANEY STEPS OUT INTO THE AUDIENCE...
DEAD! EVERY FREAKIN' ONE OF THEM-- DEAD!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

3 SENSATIONAL BLOCKBUSTERS!

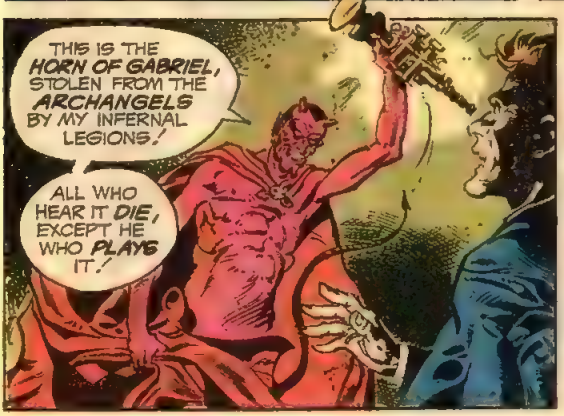
YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS THIS TRIPLE-TREAT!

RUSHING INTO THE KITCHEN, HE FINDS...
THE SAME THING HERE... ALL EXCEPT FOR THAT OLD CLEANING LADY! THAT OLD DEAF CLEANING LADY!

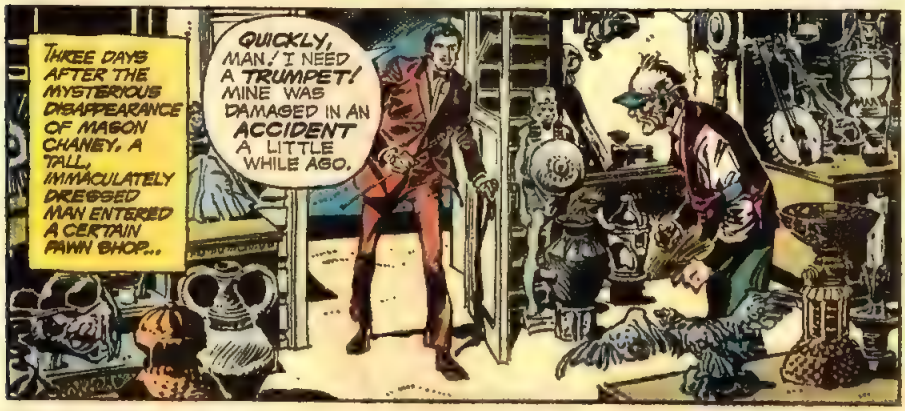

SOMEHOW THE TRUMPET IS RESPONSIBLE! EVERYONE WHO HEARD IT IS DEAD EXCEPT ME! I'VE GOT TO FIND THAT OLD PAWNBROKER!

SOON...
OKAY, FRIEND--! I WANT SOME TRUTH, CLEAR AND FAST! WHAT'S WITH THAT TRUMPET YOU SOLD ME?

VERY WELL, MY IMPETUOUS FRIEND, YOU SHALL HAVE IT! DO YOU FIND IT EASIER TO RECOGNIZE ME NOW?


THIS IS THE HORN OF GABRIEL, STOLEN FROM THE ARCHANGELS BY MY INFERNAL LEGIONS!
ALL WHO HEAR IT DIE, EXCEPT HE WHO PLAYS IT!

THIS IS FOR REAL! I'VE GOT TO FIND SOMEBODY WHO'LL HELP! BUT FIRST I MUST FIND SOMEBODY WHO'LL BELIEVE ME!


THREE DAYS AFTER THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF MAGON CHANEY, A TALL, IMMACULATELY DRESSED MAN ENTERED A CERTAIN PAWN SHOP...
QUICKLY, MAN! I NEED A TRUMPET! MINE WAS DAMAGED IN AN ACCIDENT A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

DC TAKES A GIANT STEP FORWARD IN '74!

That treacly human postman just slipped a batch of letters into the slot and now he's running—look at him go—for the sidewalk. Think he'll outrun the fen fiend at his heels? Oh, no matter . . . let's look at the mail.

Dear Mr. O'Neil:

Welcome to the Dark Mansion! Whether your doing or not, issue number 13 was the best issue in ages. Well, not really, as all the mystery magazines are currently exceptionally good. This issue, though, was almost flawless, especially in the area of art.

"The Man Who Waxed and Waned" features the best Alcala art I've seen. This artist has taken Nestor Redondo's place as the best DC mystery artist. And the script was involving. The only half-way bad thing about the presentation was that Mike Kaluta's cover interpretation was sloppy.

Why didn't you credit Gil Kane and inker Wayne Howard for the splendid artwork on "The Eavesdropper"? Certainly they deserve recognition. Had I not seen the credits listed in Paul Levitz's fine *Comic Reader*, I would have guessed it to be the work of Gil Kane and Wally Wood.

I have a few questions. What is meant by "art continuity"? And how about a few lines of biography on Russell Carley, Michael Fleisher, and Don Karr?

If this is any indication of the way you run a mystery magazine, by all means, stay around!

Mark Lucke, Beeville, Texas

Karr is an actor who moonlights as a writer. Fleisher is the author of the forthcoming "First Encyclopedia of Great Comic Book Heroes" who moonlights as a comics scripter. Carley is a painter who moonlights as a guy who tells the artists what pictures to draw—"art continuity" he calls his job. And the person you said should "stay around" is a Ghastly Unmentionable who moonlights as a human being . . .

* * * * *

Dear Mr. O'Neil:

To tell the truth, I was expecting a lot more of *Dark Mansion* #13 than I got. The quality that seems to come with your name wherever it appears was not there this time.

A Mike Kaluta cover is ordinarily something to cheer about. But this time I was not cheering. The faces were ridiculous looking. I saw the signature and I told myself, "Naw, can't be." Guess everybody has his bad days.

The first story contained the only fathomable reason for having paid 20c for the book. You know what the reason was? Al Alcala, that's what. Combine a good script with Alcala's art and one gets a truly masterful piece of work. Compare this story with the second one and you will see what I mean. The second story had a good plot but it did not go over very well because of the amateurish art.

DC has several good horror artists that are not seen regularly enough. Could it be that these artists want higher pay, causing editors to go to cheaper and inferior material? Maybe the number of mystery titles could be cut down so that the best material could be put together. I, for one, would rather see one really good book than two or three mediocre ones.

Bruce Barnett, Port Arthur, Texas

All artists want raises. Why, they have the gall to demand two bowls of dog gruel daily. The nerve . . .

* * * * *

Dear Denny,

Very glad to see you appointed the new editor. You have a knack of improving publications once you take them over. (Though Mr. Orlando was doing very well.) The cover by Kaluta was weird and I missed his opening splash page of the sensuous she.

"The Man Who Waxed and Waned" would have been routine had it not been for super art by Alcala. "The Eavesdropper" by Kane and Howard was really shocking. The mature script and beautiful art helped pull it off.

Craig Ledbetter, Houston, Texas

* * * * *

Dear Denny,

Your first outing as the editor of *Dark Mansion* was fantastic.

The Kaluta cover was superb. He has got to be tied in first place with Wrightson for best cover artist. (With the exception of Adams, and lately, I've only seen him in the *National Lampoon*.)

Back to *Dark Mansion*: "The Man Who Waxed and Waned" was a good story—too bad it was drawn by Alcala. His art is nice, but too much is too much. He has done innumerable stories for DC's mystery mags since his debut in *Sinister House* last summer. It's getting plain tiring.

I, personally, would like to see more Wood (by himself), Kaluta, Nino, Raebeny, Buckler, Williamson, Frazetta (yes, I know it's impossible, but can't you just ask for one measly cover?), Wrightson and Reese. But like I said, don't overdo one artist.

Les Peterson, (No address given)

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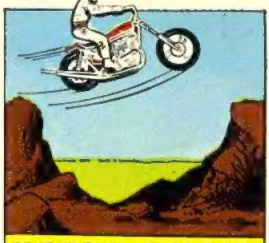

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